

In the Claims:

Claims 1 and 4 have been amended herein. The claims and their status are shown below.

1. (Currently Amended) A method for collecting microorganisms from a swab sample, comprising the steps:

a) centrifuging a swab extraction assembly comprising:

i) a swab sample comprising a swab and said microorganisms,

ii) an inner containment vessel having an open end sized so that said swab can be inserted into said inner containment vessel via said open end of said inner containment vessel, and having [[an]] a single aperture through which said swab cannot be transmitted but through which said microorganisms can be transmitted, and

iii) an outer containment vessel having an open end sized so that said inner containment vessel can be inserted into said outer containment vessel via said open end of said outer containment vessel, and having a closed end so that when said outer containment vessel with a swab sample-containing inner containment vessel therein is centrifuged, said microorganisms are transmitted from said inner tube via said aperture and retained by said outer containment vessel near said closed end, and

b) collecting microorganisms that are retained near said closed end of said outer containment vessel.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said microorganisms are bacteria.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said microorganisms are selected from the group consisting of: Group A streptococcus (*S. pyogenes*), *Corynebacterium diphtheriae*, *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*, *Mycoplasma pneumoniae*, *Bordetella pertussis*, *Chlamydia* spp., *Legionella* spp., *Mycobacterium* spp., *Staphylococcus aureus* (nares), *Herpes simplex*, *Varicella zoster* virus, vancomycin resistant enterococci (VRE), *Shigella* spp., *Salmonella* spp., enterotoxigenic and hemorrhagic *E. coli*, *Yersinia enterocolitica*, Group B streptococcus (*S. agalactiae*), *Vibrio* spp., *Aeromonas* spp., *Plesiomonas* spp., *Edwardsiella* spp., *Clostridium difficile*, *Chlamidia trachomatis*, *Candida albicans*, *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*, *Haemophilis ducrei*, *Gardnerella vaginalis*, and *Trichomas vaginalis*.

4. (Currently Amended) A kit for obtaining microorganisms from a swab-collected biological sample, said kit comprising:

a) an inner containment vessel having an open end sized so that a swab can be inserted into said inner containment vessel via said open end of said inner containment vessel, and having [[an]] a single aperture through which said swab cannot be transmitted but through which said microorganisms can be transmitted, and

b) an outer containment vessel having an open end sized so that said inner containment vessel can be inserted into said outer containment vessel via said open end of said outer containment vessel, and having a closed end so that when said outer containment vessel with a swab sample-containing inner containment vessel therein is centrifuged, microorganisms are transmitted from said inner tube via said aperture and are retained by said outer containment vessel near said closed end, and

c) packaging material.

5. (Original) The kit of claim 4, wherein said packaging material indicates that said kit is effective for obtaining microorganisms from a sample.

6. (Original) The kit of claim 4, wherein said inner containment and said outer containment vessel are sterile and free of nucleases.

7. (Original) The kit of claim 4, further comprising a swab diluent.

8. (Original) The kit of claim 4, further comprising a swab for collecting a biological sample.